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**“Truly, they are a lady’s words”: Ema Saikō and the Construction of an Authentic Voice in  
Late Edo Period Kanshi**

Mari Nagase

Ema Saikō 江馬細香 (1787–1861) is one of the best represented woman writers of early-modern Japan, with her anthology of *kanshi* (classical Chinese poetry), *Shōmu ikō*, being annotated and translated into modern Japanese in 1992, and over 150 poems being translated and published in a single book, *Breeze Through Bamboo: Kanshi of Ema Saikō*, in 1998.<sup>1</sup> Whereas Saikō’s success is to be credited to her own talent, she was also fortunate to have benefitted from the long and productive mentorship of the famous scholar-poet, Rai San’yō 頼山陽 (1780–1832). Since the two lived approximately sixty-five miles apart, Saikō received her instruction through correspondence. She mailed her drafts to San’yō, who corrected and commented upon them in red before returning them to her.<sup>2</sup> An examination of these drafts offers ample opportunity to explore San’yō’s influence on Saikō’s poetry—most particularly his imprint on her fashioning a feminine self-portrait as well as his guidance in her development of “the true poetry” that reflects her “real circumstances.”

One reason Saikō’s poetry is so appealing is because her individualistic expression is often self-reflective and exposes an acute observation of her personal environment. In his introduction to *Breeze Through Bamboo*, translator Hiroaki Sato highlights the autobiographical quality of Saikō’s poems by stating, “To read Saikō’s poems is to relive the life of a liberated soul toward the end of the so-called feudalistic period.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed, Saikō’s poems seem to allow us an authentic glimpse into her psyche as well as the cultural and social circumstances affecting

her life. At the same time, Saikō's poetry has frequently been applauded for its feminine quality. Iritani Sensuke 入谷仙介, for example, praises Saikō for the way she “demonstrated the possibility of conveying a woman's delicate psychology in Chinese verse,” while Ibi Takashi 揖斐高 comments, “Saikō succeeded in achieving womanly poetry, clean and enchanting, as her own distinctive style.”<sup>4</sup> These two kinds of evaluation of Saikō's poetry—one being of an individualistic, autobiographical expression and the other a distinctively feminine expression—illustrate the poetic achievement she attained under the influential literary ideology strongly promoted by San'yō, who particularly emphasized ideals of “truth” and “genuineness” in writing. This emphasis led Saikō to internalize the idealistic “true woman” persona established in the literary tradition and to imitate the conventional feminine mode of expression. At the same time, this ideal of genuineness encouraged Saikō to write truthfully about her experiences, eventually allowing her to attain the confidence to represent her actual life experiences and thoughts in *kanshi* form—thus presenting the image of a woman who often transgressed the social roles expected of women. Through examining the poetic exchanges between Saikō and San'yō, this article will explore the contradictory nature of the poetic philosophy of genuineness, showing how it was a double-edged sword that led Saikō to successfully form a distinctive womanly style only to subvert it and create her own poetry transcending her gendered authorship.

### **Saikō's Encounter with San'yō and *Seirei* Poetics**

Ema Saikō was born in 1787 in Ōgaki in Mino Province as the first daughter of the locally prestigious Ema family. Saikō's father, Ema Ransai 江馬蘭斎 (1747–1839), was successful as an official physician for the domain, taught Dutch medicine in his private school,

and operated a clinic for the public. Ransai favored his talented daughter and had her study Chinese-style painting from a very early age. When Saikō reached her teens, Ransai arranged for her to study Chinese-style painting by correspondence with the famous Kyoto monk-painter, Gyokurin 玉潏 (1751–1814).<sup>5</sup> As Chinese-style painting often incorporated *kanshi* writing, her education naturally extended to *kanshi* reading and composition. In 1813, Rai San'yō visited the Ema family while traveling through the area to recruit students and raise funds to establish his own private school in Kyoto. On this occasion, twenty-seven year old Saikō became his student.<sup>6</sup> She sent her poems periodically to Kyoto for San'yō to review. Through the years, she visited Kyoto seven times to see her teacher in person.

San'yō's school in Kyoto was named *Shin juku* 真塾, or *Makoto juku*, epitomizing his conviction to the importance of *shin* 真, which encompasses such concepts as genuineness, truth, sincerity, fidelity, and authenticity. This character frequently appears in San'yō's positive commentary on some of Saikō's poems. For example, San'yō complimented the following poem by commenting, "Actual event, genuine poem. This delights me, this pleases me" (*jitsuji shinshi, yorokobubeshi yorokobubeshi*, 實事真詩 可喜可喜).

#### Arranging a Chrysanthemum

Having cut a yellow flower, I put it beside a jade screen.

It is regrettable that I cannot find a tidy match for this restrained scent.

A branch of rose with its hips ripe and red,

I casually add it to a single-flower vase; it accompanies the winter flower.<sup>7</sup>

插菊

剪取黃花傍翠屏

惜無清侶比幽馨

一枝紅熟薔薇子

漫伴寒葩上膽瓶

The vivid imagery of a subtly fragrant yellow chrysanthemum arranged with red rosehips in front of a green jade screen is sharp and distinctive. However, what San'yō highlighted was its actuality. The assumption is that Saikō faithfully recorded her process of arranging flowers, thus, she created “genuine poetry” (眞詩) based on an “actual event” (實事).

San'yō's emphasis on truthfulness echoes the poetic approach called *seirei* 性靈 (Ch. *xingling*), which has been translated as “spiritualist,” “native sensibility,” or “nature and inspiration.”<sup>8</sup> In reaction to the formalistic approach that promoted imitation of the established styles of admired poets, the *seirei* poetics emphasized what they referred to as a poet's truthful, sincere expression based on personal experience and perception. One *seirei* proponent, Yamamoto Hokuzan 山本北山 (1752–1812), a wealthy Confucian scholar in Edo, introduced this new set of poetic values to Japanese intellectuals in *Sakushi shikō* 作詩志穀 (Thoughts on Composing Poetry) published in 1783. Hokuzan grounded his argument on the poetic views of Yuan Hongdao 袁宏道 (1568–1610), a poet and leading exponent of the *xingling* poetics in the late Ming. Hongdao had criticized the prevailing formalistic approach and formed a new poetic ideal that emphasized the poet's natural sensibilities. Adopting Hongdao's conviction, Hokuzan severely attacked the formalists' poetic approach propagated by Ogyū Sorai 荻生徂徠 (1666–1728) and his student Hattori Nankaku 服部南郭 (1682–1759) and proclaimed the virtue of *seirei* poetics. The passage below by Hokuzan summarizes the goals of *seirei* poetics.

Generally, it is important in writing poetry to make its meaning deep and its phrases fresh and novel [*seishin* 清新]. You should endeavor not to be affected by the

debauchery of plagiarism, just as you work hard to eliminate hackneyed phrases in your writing. Remember, it is much better to compose a clumsy verse gushing out your own poetry [*ware no shi* 吾詩] than to make a skillful poem cribbing expressions from others' poems.<sup>9</sup>

Hokuzan stressed the importance of “one’s own poetry” (*ware no shi*) and extolled the “freshness and novelty” (*seishin*) that accompanied such poetry. He also states, quoting Hongdao, “Why should great men discard the true poetry they possess within themselves and imitate the poetry of others?”<sup>10</sup> In this statement, a new literary value, “the true poetry they possess within themselves” (*onore ni yūsuru shinshi* 己レニ有スル眞詩), was propagated. As Hokuzan’s writing intimates, *seirei* aesthetics celebrated “true poetry” and explained that such poetry can only be generated by referring to one’s own experience. San’yō’s adoption of *seirei* poetics into his poetic instruction is noticeable. Praising Saikō’s poem that describes an event during a trip to Ise, he comments, “It is all truth, thus novel. You profoundly understand the principle of San’yō’s school” (*Tada shin yue ni shin, fukaku San’yō kaketsu wo u*, 唯眞故新 深得山陽家訣).<sup>11</sup> This remark, “it is all truth, thus novel,” clearly resonates with the foremost ideal of *seirei* poetics: honesty of expression and freshness. San’yō valued the idea of *shin*, or genuineness, so highly that he considered it the primary doctrine of his school. Ultimately, it was this literary value that so strongly affected Saikō’s poetry.

### **Essentialism and Realism: The Double Bind of Genuine Expression**

As mentioned earlier, Saikō’s poetry is often acclaimed for its distinctively feminine quality. Fukushima Riko 福島理子, a scholar who selected and explicated the *kanshi* poems of three late Edo-period women for a volume of Iwanami’s *Edo Kanshi-sen* series, characterizes

Saikō's poetry as "very womanly and rich with a tender sensibility grounded in her actual feelings."<sup>12</sup> However, quickly after this evaluation, Fukushima suggests the influence of San'yō's instruction that urged Saikō to "make the most of the unique sensibility of women."<sup>13</sup> Robert Campbell, a specialist in *kanbun* literature, points out in his review of *Breeze Through Bamboo* that, "His [San'yō's] comments on the finished poems [of Saikō] show him nudging his pupil closer and closer to his poetic ideal of womanliness and in his interventions with her rough drafts we catch him, more than once, trying to 'womanize' the text."<sup>14</sup> Atsuko Sakaki also discusses San'yō's "distinct outlooks on gender" highlighting his praise for the womanliness of Saikō's poems as well as his compliment for her excellent non-feminine poems that exhibit her "mastering of the masculine discourse."<sup>15</sup>

These critical reviews suggest that Saikō, being a woman, produced fresh womanly poetry in the masculine genre of *kanshi*, but that "womanly poetry" was not simply a natural product originating with her nature and gender. It was rather the fruit of San'yō's instruction and her subsequent effort to write verse in a recognizably feminine style. San'yō's comments on Saikō's poems do suggest that he guided her towards making "womanly" poetry. However, my argument is that he ended up feminizing her poetry because of his strong conviction to poetic "truthfulness." As I mentioned earlier, the "truthfulness" San'yō encouraged her to pursue was twofold: on the one hand, Saikō was encouraged to write honestly and truthfully about her own personal experience and feelings; on the other hand, she was expected to represent "true womanliness" in her poetry because she was a woman. Consequently, in theory, her poetic persona as a woman was required to be consistent not only with her real-life circumstances but also with the established feminine poetics so that her poetry would be recognized as "genuinely feminine." However, this double bind of truthfully representing her actual life while producing

“a genuine woman’s words” is ultimately contradictory, as the truthful representation of herself is not always the same as the representation of a “true woman,” an idealistic construct.

In discussing the feminine quality of Chinese song lyrics, Grace Fong writes, “*shih* poetry in the T’ang, as in most periods of Chinese history, is a male discourse essentially founded on a poetics that is apparently non-gender-specific and ‘universal.’ Yet the ‘universal’ poetics of *shih* poetry has all the underlying assumptions of male perspective and orientation.”<sup>16</sup> Chinese *shih* poetry, the poetic form Saikō employed for her writing, was pervaded with this “universal” and masculine discourse. In this tradition of Chinese poetry, a specific poetic style had been cultivated to speak of and for women. It abstracted and defined quintessential feminine qualities and crystallized an ideal feminine image from a masculine perspective. This specific style of feminine poetics most commonly objectified a young, beautiful woman, often a woman experiencing unfulfilled love, followed by resentment, seclusion and loneliness. The “genuine women’s words” that San’yō and Saikō sought to achieve in poetry were not free from this established feminine representation. To make her poetry recognizable as “a woman’s words,” Saikō needed to fashion her poetry after this established feminine style. While Saikō was a young woman, the internalization of the feminine ideal, embodied by youth and grace, may have appeared possible, even pleasant. However, while the conventional poetic representation of women was sometimes compatible with her reality, at other times they would conflict. As she aged and matured as a poet, this distinctive conflict between traditional feminine representation and her reality became increasingly clear, both to Saikō and San’yō.

A letter from San’yō to Saikō written in the tenth month of 1814 illustrates the issue of ambivalence between the literary representation of a “woman” and a realistic portrait of Saikō. San’yō had requested Saikō to perform the calligraphy of his poem composed in the *kōren* 香奩



style, which typically depicts a quintessentially feminine, idealized woman.<sup>17</sup> While on his journey to Onomichi, San'yō received Saikō's finished copy. He made a note on this work to introduce his calligrapher to the local art connoisseurs.

This is my poem composed in the *kōren* style. My female disciple Ema Saikō hand-copied it. My calligraphy tends to be wild, even writing this kind of poetry. It is as if a man with a beard and bushy eyebrows was compelled to learn dancing. Although Saikō studies my calligraphy, she always renders it as a soft and gentle work, and naturally shows charm. A trace of powder and a smell of cosmetic oil adorn the paper. Indeed, her hand matches the style of this poem.<sup>18</sup>

Then, in the letter to Saikō, San'yō excused himself for embellishing her image.

I introduced the work in this way, although I thoroughly understand that you never write on topics related to heavy powder and cosmetic oil. Yet, if I had not expressed it in this way, it wouldn't have sounded womanly. I explained my reason to the people present as well, and we laughed.<sup>19</sup>

While writing the introduction describing Saikō as a calligrapher, San'yō chose to portray her as “womanly” (*onna rashiku* 女らしく) by conforming to the conventional manner of representing a woman. Thus, he depicted her as writing while elaborately made up. He was fully aware of the fabrication and even felt a need to excuse himself in a personal letter to Saikō for the glossy fabrication. In his work for public display, however, he gave priority to a womanly representation of Saikō over a realistic description of her. This episode exemplifies the discrepancy between a literary representation of “authentic womanliness” and a realistic portrayal of a female poet that Saikō needed to resolve.

## Pursuit of Women's Words

San'yō marked some of Saikō's poems with such phrases as, "Truly, it is a verse by a lady" (*makoto ni keishū no shi nari*, 真 [sic] 閨秀之詩也), "Truly, they are a lady's words" (*makoto ni kore keishū no go nari*, 真 [sic] 是閨秀語), "Truly, a reflection of a woman's voice" (*makoto ni jorō no seiki nari*, 真 [sic] 女郎聲氣).<sup>20</sup> These phrases include the key character "真," signaling his endorsement. Indeed, many of his positive comments including the exclamatory "真" praise the womanliness embodied in the poems, demonstrating San'yō's encouragement of such feminine poetic presentations.

Most poems exhibiting feminine gestures were composed when Saikō was in her late twenties and thirties. The following poem was composed in 1814, about a year after Saikō had become San'yō's student. He remarked, "Truly, a verse by a lady poet" (*makoto ni keishū no shi nari*, 真 [sic] 閨秀之詩也).

### A Summer Afternoon

A day as long as a year, time moves slowly.

A fine rain falls continuously, plums ripening.

By the afternoon window I have napped fully in my quiet room.

Now I have finished copying four amorous poems.<sup>21</sup>

夏日偶作

永日如年晝漏遲

霏微細雨熟梅時

午窓眠足深閨靜

臨得香奩四艷詩

This poem displays a typical feminine bearing. The woman is alone, idle, feeling the slow passage of time in her secluded, quiet chamber. She lives leisurely, almost unnaturally free from normal, worldly household duties. The application of such terms as *shinkei* 深閨 (a deep, inner chamber), which intimates a secluded woman's room, makes the gender attribution of the speaking subject obvious. In the last line, the poet mentions her intention to copy "four amorous poems" (*kōren shi-enshi* 香奩四艷詩). This description is symbolic, as it divulges her process of learning and producing feminine poetry. She copies idealistic images of women defined in the amorous poems, then, produces feminine poetry herself, modeling her work and herself after the poetic representation of the women she copies. She reproduces the quintessential feminine image in her own self-presentation, thus successfully resulting in a "genuine woman's poem." In addition to the laudatory remark, San'yō marked all the characters in this poem indicating his full approval and appreciation.

It should be noted that Saikō intended to describe the reality of her life because *kanshi* writing under the influence of *seirei* aesthetics strongly expected this of a poet. Thus, readers would assume that Saikō herself felt the hot, humid summer day to be long; that she regularly had a nap; that her room in the countryside was quiet; that she was truly living a leisurely life as the unmarried daughter of a wealthy family. The problem was that the reality perceivable and describable within the established feminine poetic code was limited to this type of portrayal.

There is another poem among the works composed in 1814 that San'yō remarked upon because of its feminine style.

#### A Winter Day

Years pass swiftly like an arrow shot from the string.

My small nephew's now past my hips, the big one past my shoulders.

In my inner-room I've watched both children grow,  
and feel my "fragrant years" further decrease.<sup>22</sup>

冬日偶題

流光倏忽箭離絃

小姪過腰大姪肩

閨裡看他兩兒長

儂身更覺減芳年

Recognizing her nephews' physical growth, the poetess concludes that she is aging. Traditionally, that had been a vital concern for women. On this poem San'yō commented, "The mood is sad and mournful. This is truly a lady's words" (*fuzei seiwan nishite makoto ni kore keishū no go nari*, 風情悽惋 真 [sic] 是閨秀語). A woman's sorrow at losing the fresh beauty of youth was a recycled subject, frequently combined with the grief of losing the love of a man. Thus, Saikō's comment on her declining appearance conforms to a conventional subject, one particular to women. In addition, Saikō was in her late twenties, unmarried, which would have seemed the right age to express a concern about getting older. This timing gives the poem a sense of authenticity. Significantly, San'yō's corrections of this poem show his preference for perfecting a conventional feminine image rather than preserving a more accurate description of the scene. Saikō originally rendered the third line as, "Around my sitting place the two children gradually grew up" (坐下稍因兩兒長), presenting herself as a family member surrounded by her nephews.<sup>23</sup> San'yō changed this line into, "in my chamber, I've watched the two children grow," (閨裡看他兩兒長), which lessens her intimacy with the two children. Instead, the revised line makes the reader visualize the speaking subject in a solitary state, secluded in a woman's

chamber, from which she views her sister's sons. The correction effectively separates the poetess from the children, enhancing the image of a lonely woman, which more exactly conforms to traditional feminine poetics.

In the spring of 1815, Saikō purchased a copy of the *Mingyuan shigui* 名媛詩歸 (*Poetic Retrospective of Famous Ladies*, ca. 1620) on the recommendation of San'yō, who went to great pains to obtain a copy for her. Having been compiled by Zhong Xing 鍾惺 (1574–1627), one of the leading advocates of *xingling* poetics in the late Ming dynasty, the collection is a comprehensive record of Chinese women's poetry, including 2,700 poems by more than 400 women from ancient times to the late Ming era. Soon after obtaining this copy, Saikō fashioned a set of four seasonal poems on those composed by the Wife of Zheng Kui 鄭奎妻 (?–?), a poet from the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368). Although Saikō did not explicitly indicate her models, her allusion to the Wife of Zheng Gui's poems is evident. The example below is Saikō's verse on summer.

#### Summer

A pair of parent swallows sweep in the blinds,  
and I wake from nap dreams in the slow afternoon.  
Perspiration moistening the collar, beads of sweat on skin,  
dislodged hairpin tangled in side-locks, ample hair droops.  
The stitching by the window I'm too languid to resume,  
no desire to open a book half read and put away.  
Day-lily flowers fragrant outside the railing,  
I flutter my silk fan quietly, standing in idleness.<sup>24</sup>

#### 夏詞

一雙乳燕入簾帷  
睡夢初覺午漏遲  
微汗透襟紅露濕  
落釵鬢髮綠雲垂  
窓前綵繡猶慵刺  
帙裏殘書無意披  
萱草花香曲欄外  
閑搖羅扇立多時

Next is the corresponding poem by the Wife of Zheng Gui.

#### Summer

Plantain tree, the leaves extend like tails of the blue phoenix.  
Day-lily, the flowers are like beaks of the golden phoenix.  
A pair of parent swallows comes out from an engraved beam.  
A few new lotuses float on green water.  
Weather troubles me, when daylight is long,  
Too languid to pick up a needle and thread this slow afternoon.  
Rising I stand in the shade of a pomegranate tree.  
For fun I try to hit a baby bush-warbler with a plum fruit.<sup>25</sup>

#### 夏詞

芭蕉葉展青鸞尾  
萱草花含金鳳嘴  
一雙乳燕出彫梁

數點新荷浮綠水

困人天氣日長時

針線慵拈午漏遲

起向石榴陰畔立

戲將梅子打鶯兒

It is clear here Saikō adopted some phrasing from the Wife of Zheng Gui. Examples are, “a pair of parent swallows” (一雙乳燕), “the slow afternoon” (午漏遲), and “day-lily flowers” (萱草花). Saikō also employed the sentiment of languidness, and especially the tedium of taking up a needle. As for the difference in the two poems, Saikō excluded the playful assault on a baby bird described in the last line of the poem of the Wife of Zheng Gui. Meanwhile, Saikō added a reference to her reading, which she also found tiresome. The reading was paired with the sewing, both of which may likely have been regular activities of Saikō’s. Another apparent difference in the two poems is Saikō’s objective, physical description of her body in the third and fourth lines. The female speaker who has just awakened describes the sweat on her skin, reddened with rouge (紅露), and her long hair, untied. This type of visual, sensual portrayal of a woman’s physical presence in her private space had been typically practiced by male poets. The practice even formulated a distinctive genre called palace-style poetry (Ch. *gongtishi*, J. *kyūtaishi* 宮体詩). The best palace-style poetry was anthologized into the *Yūtai xinyong* 玉台新詠 (*New Songs from the Jade Terrace*) by the Liang 梁 court (502–557), and this anthology circulated widely in the Edo period. The four lines below are part of a palace-style poem composed by the Emperor Jianwen 簡文帝 (r. 549–551).

Smiling as she dreams, lovely dimples appear;

Sleeping on her chignon, crushed petals drop.

Patterns of the bamboo mat impressed on jade wrists,

Fragrant perspiration soaks the red silk.<sup>26</sup>

夢笑開嬌靨

眠鬟壓落花

簾文生玉腕

香汗浸紅紗

This fragment uses the imagery of a fallen hair ornament and perspiration soaking the sleeping woman's robe. Although Saikō may not have referred particularly to this verse, her visual presentation of the female speaking subject in the third and fourth lines in her piece, "Summer," clearly follows the poetic manner of the masculine gaze, which was typically demonstrated in palace-style poetry.

On reading this poem, San'yō did not detect that Saikō referred to the poems of the Wife of Zheng Gui, but inferred that she had modeled them after seasonal poems by Su Shi 蘇軾 (1037–1101). The first part of San'yō's comment on Saikō's seasonal poems reads as follows.

The seasonal poems of Master Su Shi were composed in the form of ancient verse. You modeled your poems after his poems while using the regulated *lǔshi* form. Your poems are also naturally good to recite.<sup>27</sup>

After stating his conjecture, San'yō admired Saikō's poems mentioning her skill at transforming Su Shi's masculine tone into a feminine one.

All the phrases are graceful and beautiful and *they truly demonstrate a woman's way of speaking*. A man with a beard and thick eyebrows would not be able to accomplish this style even if he imitated it with various schemes.<sup>28</sup>



San'yō's assumption that Saikō's poetic style would be impossible for men to imitate attributes the attainment of womanly expression to her gender. The truth was that Saikō constructed the feminine poem by imitating specific diction and sentiment found in the anthology of women's poetry and interweaving them with a conventional visual representation of a woman fashioned in male-authored palace-style poetry.

San'yō extolled Saikō's poem when her gendered authorship was correctly espoused with feminine expression. Such poems effected "a genuine womanly poetry" and impressed San'yō with their "authenticity."

### **Pursuit of Truthful Expression**

San'yō recognized "genuineness" not only in Saikō's feminine poems, but elsewhere as well. As mentioned earlier, he applauded Saikō's Ise travel poem entitled "During My Stay in Yamada town, I Encountered Kashiwabuchi Atei," commenting, "*It is all truth, thus novel*. You profoundly understand the principle of San'yō's school."<sup>29</sup> The poem describes her joy at unexpectedly seeing an old friend.

During My Stay in Yamada town, I Encountered Kashiwabuchi Atei  
Drinking day after day, I have enjoyed myself, yet I was missing my old friends.  
Your visit to my place delights me—it is as if we promised to meet.  
For many years, we regularly visited each other and had drinks.  
Now we drink together in an alien land—a sense of strangeness arises.<sup>30</sup>

山田客中邂逅柏蛙亭  
日酔雖娛少舊知  
喜君一叩似相期

幾年杯酒常来往

同酌他鄉更覺奇

Saikō traveled to Ise in 1829 on the occasion of the Ise Shrine renewal that takes place every twenty years. There she encountered her friend Kashiwabuchi Atei 柏淵蛙亭 (1785–1835) who was also visiting Ise. Atei's home in Takada village was about thirty-five miles away from Ōgaki where Saikō lived. Atei and Saikō were both members of the local *kanshi* circle Hakuō-sha 白鷗社 and had cultivated a friendship. The happy surprise at meeting this familiar friend from home at a strange place inspired Saikō to compose a poem. This poem is not concerned with feminine expression at all. The speaking subject is traveling, drinking at various stops, enjoying meeting with her male friend, and drinking together. Her freedom and activity opposes the conventional image of a secluded woman, but that was not considered an issue for this poem. As she recorded a real and personal event honestly, it became “眞,” genuine and authentic poetry. The poem describes a delightful, uncanny feeling at meeting an old friend in a strange land. That is novel, “新,” expressing a sentiment that the poet discovered in her actual experience. In the evaluation of this poem, San'yō disregarded the author's gender and only saw the strength of its candid description.

Saikō sent San'yō twenty poems from her Ise trip. For this group of poems, San'yō expressed his unbounded admiration: “All the poems from your trip to Ise are about *actual events*. They make people feel as if they were traveling with you. That your poems succeeded in this respect can be said to indicate that you have not gone against my teachings.”<sup>31</sup> He expressed his high regard for her Ise travel poems because they reflected real scenes, actual circumstances, that is, in his word, *jissai* 實際.

In the comment on Saikō's poem "Arranging a Chrysanthemum" discussed earlier, San'yō joined the two concepts "實" (actual, real) and "眞" (truth, genuineness), and put them in a phrase "actual event, genuine poem" (*jitsuji shinshi* 實事眞詩). This phrase suggests that San'yō placed about the same importance on "actuality" as "genuineness," believing a depiction of real, actual circumstances was the ground for genuine poetry.

This focus on reality eventually guided Saikō to stretch her gendered self-portrayal beyond conventions. The next poem composed in 1814 is an example.

#### Summer Afternoon at a Leisurely Dwelling

What's the problem with the scorching heat in this human world? –Nothing.

The shade of plantain leaves is deep, coolness naturally there.

Refreshing breeze over the couch, I begin to awaken.

Sun slants through half-raised blinds as I recite a verse, exaggerating my voice.

After eating, I call my nephew for a game of *go*.

After bathing, I have the boy water irises.

We haphazardly sun our books, an abundance of volumes.

Attempting to organize scattered cases, my evening is always busy.<sup>32</sup>

閑居夏日

人間炎熱亦何妨

蕉葉陰深自占涼

一榻清風眠始覺

半簾斜日吟正長

飯餘呼姪圍碁局

浴後倩僮澆石菖

亂晒藏書千百卷

欲收散帙晚常忙

The first half of the poem presents the leisurely, tasteful life of a cultivated woman of good family, which is in accord with conventional feminine poetics. However, the latter half rather prosaically describes the poet's evening activity and routine. She eats, takes a bath, enjoys her time with family members and attempts to organize books. By describing these ordinary, worldly activities in her life, this poem replaces the literary construct of the feminine ideal with a living, social female subject. San'yō extolled her approach and commented, "All phrases are about actual matters. That is the principle of my school" (*kuku jissai kore boku no hōmon nari* 句々實際是僕法門).<sup>33</sup> His praise again highlights the "actual matters" (實際) and endorses truthful writing, even though the approach resulted in the dissociation of her self-portrayal from the established poetic image of a woman.

The principle of truthful expression freed Saikō to create self-reflective poems diverging from the established literary mode. Another example of such a poem is "Autumn Night" composed in 1817. Autumn is the season that traditionally inspired poets to compose about sorrow in life (*shū* 愁). Saikō challenges this poetic expectation, honestly describing her contented state.

#### Autumn Night

Under the lamp, I have just finished copying some writings.

Fresh coolness in both sleeves, refreshing.

The chirping of insects are autumn's walls, all four sides.

The moonlight suggests it is about midnight.

Not sickly, I know little of sorrow.

Sleeping a lot, my mind is at peace.

My poem to express emotion thus becomes small-scale.

Rouge and powder, they do not interest me.<sup>34</sup>

秋夜

燈下臨書罷

新涼雙袖清

蟲聲秋四壁

月影夜三更

無病知愁少

多眠覺意平

遣懷因小句

脂粉不關情

The gender of the authorship is discernible only from the last line that refers to cosmetics. Yet, the poet rejects her interest in “rouge and powder” that had been typically associated with women, asserting her separation from traditional feminine representation. As a non-feminine female poet, Saikō describes the bracing autumn night in the first four lines. She then describes her personal state, implicitly contrasting it to the typical autumn poetic presentation of a melancholy self. While many women poets in Chinese literary tradition had referred to their sickness in their verses, Saikō expressed her fine health. Being unmarried but enjoying good family relationships and a privileged life, she was free from worries. She could sleep well; her mind was peaceful and content. She was not like the poets who led dramatic and tragic lives and

left great heartbroken poems. Unlike typical feminine, literary figures, she was not interested in beautifying herself. This poem exemplifies Saikō's exploration of "self" promoted by *seirei* poetics, and her awareness of existing poetic expectations that she might need to challenge if she believed in the principle of truthful expression. San'yō did not leave any comment on this poem but marked the third and fourth lines indicating his appreciation of them.

A poem composed in 1822 further demonstrates her exploration of honest self-presentation. Even the title, "Sending to Myself," suggests her desire to describe herself with no concerns for external authority that might expect her to write in a certain way.

#### Sending to Myself

I don't resemble other women who cling to their alluring appearance,  
whose chignons are fine and distinct, who succumb to gloominess and languidness.  
By chance, while sitting, I thought of a new phrase hearing a cock crow.  
I had quit with needlework a long time ago—I ask my maids to sew.  
With my eccentric nature, I have never attained the Four Virtues.  
My state is leisurely: my life one without the Three Obediences.  
Within half of my allotted life, I have had ample opportunities for excursions.  
Beneath the moon, around the flowers, there my feeling becomes exquisite.<sup>35</sup>

#### 自贈

不似他家惜冶容  
髻鬟楚楚任幽慵  
偶思新句聞雞坐  
久廢裁衣倩婢縫  
性僻何曾脩四德

身閑應為欠三從

半生贏得多行樂

月底花邊情正濃

In the first couplet, the poet separates herself from the typical poetic feminine self, a languid, unhappy woman with elaborate makeup and hairdo. After distinguishing herself from the “other women,” she discloses her abandonment of the symbolic woman’s task, sewing. She informs the reader that she has maids to do the work, betraying her actual social setting. Then in the fifth line, she denies her commitment to a Confucian precept of Four Virtues that include womanly speech, womanly virtue, womanly manner, and womanly work. The precept exercised a strong influence forming moral guidelines for women in Confucian culture. In the sixth line, she excuses herself from another Confucian doctrine, Three Obediences. The doctrine taught a woman to obey three men throughout her life, first her father, then her husband, and lastly, her son. As Saikō was unmarried, the last two did not exist in her life. Then in the seventh line, she celebrates her enjoyment of many opportunities to travel, distinguishing herself from the home-bound majority. In the last line she declares that her love or feeling (*jō* 情) is directed toward the beauty of nature, dissociating herself from a typical poetic female persona consumed by romantic love, identifying herself as a cultured poetic individual admiring the beauty of nature. With this poem, Saikō vivaciously frees herself from usual womanhood, illustrating her contrasting, unconventional life. About this poem, San’yō kept silent. No comment, no marks, and no corrections are made. It is uncertain if this complete silence displayed his disapproval or not, as there are other poems he did not comment on. The silence at least indicates that he neither openly endorsed the bold, honest expression in this poem nor criticized its defiance of social norms.

Saikō wrote another self-reflective poem in a similar vein six years later. She was then

forty-two years old. This time, San'yō made some corrections to improve the poem without changing the content.

### Describing Myself

The Three Obedience's I've had none of all my life;  
as my face declines, my mind grows more free.  
To try out a painting brush, I rip a light-silk sash;  
to buy myself a gourd,\* I take a silver pin out of my hair.  
Write verse on plantain, and the sheet tears in the rain;  
smear one in the air, and a geese formation appears.  
I only fear that lazy, careless women at large  
might try to follow the wind and the moon† after me.

\* A gourd was often used as a sake container.

† “Wind and moon” is a metaphor for art and poetry.<sup>36</sup>

### 自述

三從[sic]總欠一生涯  
漸逐衰顏益放懷  
擬試畫毫裂羅帶  
為粧瓢口卸銀釵  
吟題洗雨蕉箋破  
塗抹書空雁字排  
惟恐人間疎懶婦  
強將風月傲吾儕



Saikō again denies a commitment to the Confucian doctrine of Three Obediences. She perceives aging as a factor that frees her, which counters the tradition of describing women's aging as dismal. Feminine objects, such as "a light-silk sash" and "a silver pin," were symbolically disposed of. The fine sash was substituted for paper "to try out a painting brush" and the costly ornamental hairpin was exchanged for "a gourd" of sake. Now the poetess proudly expresses her enjoyment of a life involved in painting and poetry. This poem reveals the author's gender by her rejection of the feminine symbols that were associated with her only because of her gender.

San'yō corrected parts of this poem, none of which affected its basic thrust. Minor changes he made include modifications of one character each in the first and the second lines, and one two-character compound word in the seventh line.<sup>37</sup> The most substantial correction is made in the third line. Saikō originally phrased the line as "擬取羅裙換髻几," which translates as, "I intend to take my silk skirt to exchange it with a lacquered desk."<sup>38</sup> The point is that she will happily exchange a high-quality woman's robe with a writing desk. San'yō replaced "silk skirt" with "silk sash," and "a lacquered desk" with "a painting brush," and changed the grammatical construction of the line. This modification enhanced the semantic and grammatical parallel structure required in the third and fourth lines of a regulated verse in classical Chinese while preserving the symbolic functions of a woman's garment and an artist's tool. San'yō did not leave any praise or criticism, yet, he improved the poem, respecting the original content and context.

The translator of Saikō's poems Hiroaki Sato noted on this poem, "Saikō's manifesto for her way of life, the poem catalogues eccentric behavior thought to be typical of a liberated soul."<sup>39</sup> Indeed, this poem as well as the previous piece "Sending to Myself" are striking for their bold assertion of liberation from traditional womanhood. With these poems, she created a strong

portrait of herself as a poet and artist. Simultaneously, she exhibited her intentional dissociation from traditional womanhood and, in effect, from the conventional manner of representing women.

## Conclusion

This essay has examined the dramatic evolution of Saikō's poetic portrayal of herself from the feminine representation of female authorship to the bold redefinition of herself as a poet and artist. Guided by San'yō's encouragement of genuine expression, Saikō initially explored authentic woman's expression as a rare female writer in the male-dominated genre of *kanshi* by alluding to women's words of the past. Ultimately she evolved her poetic pursuit, transcending the limitations of "women's words" to achieve her own authentic expression as an individual poet.

While this essay has focused on the analysis of Saikō's representation of herself, it should be noted that her poems encompass diverse subject matter, taking up material from nature, friendship, family, history, literature, painting, trips, etc. As Saikō became older and more recognized as a painter and poet, her sphere of social activity expanded and so did her subjects and perspectives in poetic composition. Indeed, her poems are a monument not only to her literary attainment but also her social success. Some of her poems reveal a cultivated, warm friendship full of mutual respect with other intellectuals. She even became president of a local *kanshi* circle, the Kōsaisha 咬菜社. Saikō was not a lonely, socially isolated woman poet, but an active, respected participant in literary and art societies in Ōgaki and Kyoto.

Peter Kornicki, the editor of *The Female as Subject: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Japan*, and Anne Walthall, a contributor to the concluding essay of this important book,

mentioned several women who were engaged in sinological texts including Saikō, and made it clear that there were women reading and writing in classical Chinese through the Edo period.<sup>40</sup> Among them, Saikō's literary legacy is outstanding and fascinating. Walthall discussed in the aforementioned essay the haphazard nature of Edo-period women's acquisition of literacy.<sup>41</sup> Saikō's literary and artistic success may have also largely depended on such "happenstance": she was born to a wealthy, highly educated family in the cultured local town of Ōgaki; her open-minded father doted on his daughter's education; she happened to become a student of San'yō; she was allowed to remain unmarried; her relatives and their descendants carefully preserved her work. Saikō's life was as unconventional as her work was outstanding. Her exceptional achievement may appear to be an isolated example, yet, some of her works and correspondence display the existence of other women artists and poets, and even Saikō's desire to network with other accomplished women. The best example is her collection of paintings and calligraphy made by more than twenty contemporary women with whom she became acquainted.<sup>42</sup> She gathered their art works and put them together on one scroll. While her network with other male and female writers and artists remains to be more fully explored, I will conclude this essay by introducing a poem Saikō sent to a female friend Tomioka Ginshō 富岡吟松 (1762–1831). It conveys her strong confidence in accomplished women, which is akin to the bold, subversive representation of a female subject demonstrated in her poems such as "Sending to Myself" and "Describing Myself." Ginshō, the daughter of a kimono fabric store proprietor in Ise, studied the Chinese classics under a local Confucian scholar, Tsusaka Tōyō 津阪東陽 (1757–1825), and became known for her erudition. When her parents and brothers died and the business was threatened with closing, she succeeded to it. At that time, Ginshō was over thirty and unmarried. She restored the business to prosperity. The following is the first half of the poem.

Congratulating the Woman Scholar Ginshō on Her Seventieth Birthday

The strength gained from a thousand books helped you  
when you faced your house's bankruptcy.  
Recovering the business, I hear, is what you, a woman, did;  
maintaining a house doesn't have to be the work of man.<sup>43</sup>

壽吟松女学士七十

讀書千卷力堪支

當日曾逢傾厦時

興業正聞因女手

持家何必在男兒

Saikō openly celebrates female transgressions of gender roles in society. Her belief was that education, “the strength gained from a thousand books,” qualified Ginshō to “maintain a house” in place of a man. This congratulatory poem demonstrates Saikō’s pride and appreciation for accomplished women, who were more than a few during her lifetime.

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Notes

<sup>1</sup> Ema Saikō, *Ema Saikō shishū Shōmu ikō*, 2 vols. Annotated by Kado Reiko (Tokyo: Kyūko shoin, 1992). Hereafter, I refer to this book as *Shōmu ikō*.; Hiroaki Sato, trans., *Breeze Through Bamboo: Kanshi of Ema Saikō* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

<sup>2</sup> Throughout this study, I make reference to four different texts for Saikō’s poems. One is the

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*Shōmu ikō* annotated and translated by Kado Reiko and published in 1992. *Shōmu ikō* was originally published in 1871, ten years after Saikō's death. The anthology includes 350 poems selected from poems composed between 1814 and 1860 and chronologically organized. It includes comments made by San'yō, Gotō Shōin 後藤松陰 (1797–1864), and a few others. Shōin took over the role of reviewing Saikō's poems after San'yō's death. *Breeze Through Bamboo* by Hiroaki Sato is based on Kado's modern Japanese translation and includes over 150 poems. When Sato's translation is available for the poems I cite, I use his. The third text is *Shōmu shisō*, which includes about 750 poems Saikō composed between 1814 and 1832, the year San'yō died. Saikō included her revised poems and San'yō's commentary and marks. A facsimile edition was published in 1997 from Kyūko Shoin as *San'yō sensei hiten: Shōmu shisō*. Hereafter, I refer to this book as *Shōmu shisō*. I use *Shōmu shisō* when including original Chinese characters for the poems I cite. Other than these three published texts, the Ema family preserved Saikō's manuscripts. Kado Reiko kindly provided me with an opportunity to visit the Ema family to see the manuscripts in 2003. She also gave me access to her xerographic copies of the manuscripts. I would like to express my sincere appreciation for her generosity. Currently, the manuscripts are housed in the Gifu Prefectural Archival Museum (Gifu-ken Rekishi Shiryōkan) as part of the Ema Sumiko Collection. Hereafter, I refer to these manuscripts as the Saikō manuscripts.

<sup>3</sup> Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo*, 27.

<sup>4</sup> Iritani Sensuke, "Kanshi bun no yukue," in vol. 11 of *Iwanami kōza Nihon bungaku shi*, ed. Kubota Jun, *et al.* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996), 91. 女性の微妙な心理が漢詩によって表現可能なことを示した; Ibi Takashi, "Kanshi no Ryūsei," in vol. 10 of *Iwanami kōza Nihon bungaku shi*, ed. Kubota Jun, *et al.* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1996), 34. 女性らしい清艶な詩風

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を吾がものとして作り上げることに成功した。

<sup>5</sup> Saikō's life and attainment as a painter is described by Patricia Fister in her 1991 book chapter, "Female *Bunjin*: The Life of Poet-Painter Ema Saikō." In *Recreating Japanese Women, 1600–1945*, ed. Gail Lee Bernstein (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1991), 108–30.

<sup>6</sup> For more information on Saikō's initial meeting with San'yō that was followed by his romantic interest in her and a debate on the nature of their relationship, see pages three to eleven of Hiroaki Sato's introduction to *Breeze Through Bamboo*.

<sup>7</sup> My translation. *Shōmu ikō*, 69–70; *Shōmu shisō*, 68–69.

<sup>8</sup> The terms "Spiritualist" and "Native Sensibility" are used by Timothy R. Bradstock and Judith N. Rabinovitch. Timothy R. Bradstock and Judith N. Rabinovitch, *An Anthology of Kanshi (Chinese Verses) by Japanese Poets of the Edo Period (1603–1868)* (Lewiston, N.Y.: The Edwin Press, 1997), 29. The expression "nature and inspiration" is used in the *Harmony Garden: The Life, Literary Criticism, and Poetry of Yuan Mei (1716–1798)* by J. D. Schmidt (London: Routledge Curzon, 2003), 181.

<sup>9</sup> My translation. Yamamoto Hokuzan, *Sakushi shikō*, in *Kinsei bungaku ronshū*, vol. 94 of *Nihon koten bungaku taikei*, ed. Nakamura Yukihiko (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1966), 297. 凡ソ詩ハ、

趣ノ深<sup>フカフ</sup>シテ、辭ノ清新ナランコトヲ要セヨ、剽竊ノ弊ヲ免レンコトヲ欲スルコト、勉<sup>ツトメ</sup>

テ文章ノ陳言ヲ去ルガ如クセヨ、人ノ詩ヲ剽襲シテ、巧ナランヨリハ、吾詩ヲ吐出<sup>ハキ</sup>シテ、

拙キガ優<sup>マサ</sup>レルト心得ベシ。

<sup>10</sup> Translated by Peter Flueckiger in *Early Modern Japanese Literature: An Anthology 1600–1900*, ed. Haruo Shirane (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 912. The original is on

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page 285 of the *Kinsei bungaku ronshū* mentioned in note 9. 大丈夫タルモノ如何ゾ、己レニ有スル眞詩ヲ舍テ、他ノ詩ヲ剽襲模擬スベキ。

<sup>11</sup> San'yō made this comment on Saikō's poem entitled, "During My Stay in Yamada town, I Encountered Kashiwabuchi Atei." *Shōmu ikō*, 286; *Shōmu shisō*, 305.

<sup>12</sup> Fukushima Riko ed., *Joryū: Ema Saikō, Hara Saihin, Yanagawa Kōran*, vol. 3 of *Edo Kanshisen* (Tokyo: Iwanami shoten, 1995), 320. その詩の特色は非常に女性らしく、実感に即した細やかな情趣に富むところにある。

<sup>13</sup> Ibid. 女性ならではの感性をいかすようにと繰り返し助言している。

<sup>14</sup> Robert Campbell, review of *Breeze Through Bamboo: Kanshi of Ema Saikō with Illustrations by the Poet*, by Hiroaki Sato, *Monumenta Nipponica* 54:2 (Summer 1999): 284.

<sup>15</sup> Atsuko Sakaki, *Obsessions with the Sino-Japanese Polarity in Japanese Literature* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006), 124–25.

<sup>16</sup> Grace S. Fong, "Engendering the Lyric: Her Image and Voice in Song," in *Voices of the Song Lyric in China*, ed. Pauline Yu (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1994), 114.

<sup>17</sup> Poems in the *kōren* style, derived from its original signification of a "vanity box," indicate poems on women, most typically the beautiful, yet solitary and unhappy concubine living in the Palace. Han Wo 韓偓 (844–923) is most famous for this kind of poetry. He left one volume of *Xianglianji* 香奩集 (J. *Kōrenshū*, a collection of verses in the *kōren* style). Poems in the *kōren* style were generally composed by male poets.

<sup>18</sup> Rai San'yō, *Rai San'yō shokan shū*, vol. 1, ed. Tokutomi Iichirō, *et al.* (Tokyo: Min'yūsha, 1927), 192. 是余奩詩。女弟子細香所書。余書易怒張。寫是等詩。如鬢眉男子強學倡舞。細香雖學我書。柔荑所作。自帶媚。粉影脂香。往來紙上。正與詩體相稱矣。

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid. [following the writing in Chinese of note 16] . . . といったし候。脂粉題は無之事熟知候へども、かく云はねば、女らしくなき故に候。其譯も人々に申し、笑申候事に候。

<sup>20</sup> The comments were made on the following poems respectively: “A Summer Afternoon” 夏日偶作 (*Shōmu ikō*, 12–13; *Shōmu shisō*, 12); “A Winter Day” 冬日偶題 (*Shōmu ikō*, 20–21; *Shōmu shisō*, 17); “A Potted Orchid in My Room Is in Full Bloom and I Came Up with This Poem” 閨裏盆蘭盛開偶有此詩 (*Shōmu shisō*, 59). As for the character 真 in San’yō’s comments on these poems, Sanyō wrote it in the style of so-called *shinjitai* (the new *kanji* form), not in *kyūjitai* (the traditional *kanji* form), 眞, while he used *kyūjitai* for the word *seiki* 聲氣 (Saikō manuscripts). Saikō copied these commentaries by Sanyō without changing the styles of characters when compiling *Shōmu shisō*. Accordingly, I leave the character 真 as it is in *shinjitai* in these phrases while preserving the *kyūjitai* for *seiki* 聲氣.

<sup>21</sup> Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo*, 33. I have altered the first line and the last line of Hiroaki Sato’s translation following Fukushima Riko’s interpretation. Fukushima, *Joryū*, 3. This poem is also found in *Shōmu ikō*, 12–13; *Shōmu shisō*, 12.

<sup>22</sup> Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo*, 38. I have changed the third line of Sato’s translation from “In our living room I’ve observed both children grow” to “In my inner-room I’ve watched both children grow.” The word *kei* (閨), which Sato translated as the “living room,” primarily indicates a private space for a woman to live. *Shōmu ikō*, 20–21; *Shōmu shisō*, 17.

<sup>23</sup> San’yō’s corrections are found in the Saikō manuscripts. They are also noted by Kado in her annotation to the poem (*Shōmu ikō*, 21).

<sup>24</sup> Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo*, 47; *Shōmu ikō*, 32–33; *Shōmu shisō*, 25.

<sup>25</sup> My translation. In 24 *juan* of *Mingyuan shigui*. Reprinted in *Siku quanshu cunmu congshu* 四



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庫全書存目叢書 (Tainan: Zhuangyan wenhua shiye youxian gongsi, 1997), *jibu* 集部, vol. 339, 271.

<sup>26</sup> Cited and translated in “Engendering the Lyric: Her Image and Voice in Song” by Grace S. Fong, 112–13.

<sup>27</sup> *Shōmu ikō*, 36. *Shōmu shisō*, 27. 東坡先生四時詞古詩也 是則以律詩擬之 亦自可誦.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid. Emphasis added. 句々柔麗眞女子口吻 鬚眉男子百計摸倣不可得.

<sup>29</sup> *Shōmu ikō*, 286; *Shōmu shisō*, 305. Emphasis added. 唯眞故新 深得山陽家訣

<sup>30</sup> My translation. *Shōmu ikō*, 285-86; *Shōmu shisō*, 305. Kashiwabuchi Atei (1785–1835) lived in Takada village, Mino Province, present Gifu Prefecture. He was a member of the local poetry circle Hakuō-sha which Saikō also participated in. The two were good friends and occasionally went on poetic outings together.

<sup>31</sup> *Shōmu ikō*, 291; *Shōmu shisō*, 309. Emphasis added. 勢遊詩一々實際 使人有同游想 君詩能如此 可謂不負我者也.

<sup>32</sup> My translation. *Shōmu shisō*, 13. This poem is not included in *Shōmu ikō*.

<sup>33</sup> *Shōmu shisō*, 13.

<sup>34</sup> My translation. *Shōmu shisō*, 55. This poem is not included in *Shōmu ikō*.

<sup>35</sup> My translation. *Shōmu shisō*, 130-31. This poem is not included in *Shōmu ikō*.

<sup>36</sup> Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo*, 115; *Shōmu ikō*, 242–43; *Shōmu shisō*, 281.

<sup>37</sup> Saikō’s draft originally had “uneventful life” (淡生涯) instead of “all my life” (二生涯) in the first line. The second line originally had “enters (the life stage when) I can set my mind free” (入放懷) in place of “my mind grows more free” (益放懷). The seventh line had “idle and depressed (women)” (閑愁) instead of “(women) in the world at large” (人間). The original

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phrases and the modifications are found in the Saikō manuscripts. They are also noted by Kado in her annotation to the poem (*Shōmu ikō*, 243).

<sup>38</sup> Saikō manuscripts; *Shōmu ikō*, 243.

<sup>39</sup> Sato, *Breeze Through Bamboo*, 115.

<sup>40</sup> P. F. Kornicki, “Women, Education, and Literacy,” in *The Female as Subject: Reading and Writing in Early Modern Japan*, ed. P. F. Kornicki, Mara Patessio, and G. G. Rowley (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Center for Japanese Studies, 2010), 9–10, 17–18, 34; Anne Walthall, “Women and Literacy from Edo to Meiji,” in *The Female as Subject*, 220–22. Earlier, Kado Reiko introduced more than ten women *kanshi* poets in her pioneering book on Edo period women’s literature, *Edo jidai joryū bungaku no hakken* (Tokyo: Fujiwara shoten, 1998).

<sup>41</sup> Walthall, “Women and Literacy from Edo to Meiji,” 219–20.

<sup>42</sup> Fister, “Female *Bunjin*: The Life of Poet-Painter Ema Saikō,” 130.

<sup>43</sup> Sato, *Breeze through Bamboo*, 139; *Shomu ikō*, 317; *Shōmu shisō*, 329.

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